SOME MODIFICATIONS OF THE HEBREW VOWEL SYSTEM AS FOUND IN THE MASSORETIC TEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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Some Modifications of the Hebrew Vowel System as found in the Massoretic Text of the Old Testament.

Introduction.

Before proceeding to discuss the various changes in this system it is desirable to present tables and diagrams which will give a birds-eye view of the whole subject.

There are three original vowels in the Semitic languages viz: ă, ĭ, and ŭ.

The ĕ and ŏ vowels are derived from the three original ones.

The Critical Grammar of the Hebrew Language, by Isaac Nordheimer

Vol. I. pages 11 and 12, contains a very interesting account of the development of these vowels from the anatomical standpoint.

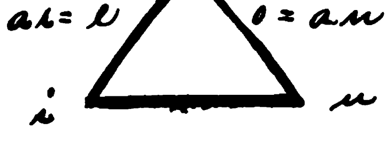
"Of all the sounds which human speech is composed that of the vowel a is the simplest and the most easily produced, it consisting of a mere emission of the voice through the unclosed lips; and on this account in most alphabets it ranks the first.

2). The vowel i is produced by the greatest horizontal dilation of the mouth, or in other words it is that vowel in the enunciation of which the oral aperture is extended longitudinally in the greatest degree.

3). The utterance of its opposite u is effected by the closest approximation of the corners of the mouth during the emission

of the voice. The remaining vowel-sounds are the intermediates of the three principal ones; thus the diphtongal vowel e holds a place between a and i, both of which sounds may be said to enter into its composition, whence it is frequently denoted both in English and French by the two conjoined; so too the diphtongal o, the medium between a and u, is represented in the latter tongue by a combination of its elements, thus au, faux. It may be worthy of mention that in the Gothic Gospels of Ulphilas the Greek vowels ε and o are respectively represented by ai and au.

The whole five may be appropriately arranged in the following manner:



The vowels on left side of the diagram are those produced by dilating and those on the right by contracting the orifice of the mouth in a horizontal direction.

The vowels placed furthest from a̲, viz: i̲ and u̲, are thus modified in the greatest degree; and those placed half-way between the simplest vowel and each of its extremes are less so, being something between the simplest and the most highly modified forms, and partaking of the nature of both."

As to the class of these vowels, the division given by Wm R. Harper, University of Chicago, is perhaps the best.

It is as follows:—

A-Class.

1. = (ă) = Pure Short.

2. ◌ִ (ĭ) = Attenuated.
3. ◌ָ (â) = Contracted.
4. ◌ֹ (ô) = Obscured.
5. ◌ָ (ā) = Tone-long.
6. ◌ֶ (e̱′) = Tone-short.
7. ◌ֶ (e′) = Tone-long.
8. ◌ֲ (a) = Tone-short.

I-Class.

1. ◌ִ (ĭ) = Pure Short.
2. ◌ֶ (ĕ) = Deflected.
3. ◌ִי (î) = Contracted.
4. ◌ֵי (ê) = Contracted.
5. ◌ֶי (ê) = Contracted.
6. ◌ֵ (ē) = Tone-long.
7. ◌ְ (e) = Tone-short.
8. ◌ֱ (^{e}) = Tone-short.

U-Class.

1. ◌ֻ (ŭ) = Pure Short.
2. ◌ָ (ŏ) = Deflected.
3. וּ (û) = Contracted.
4. וֹ (ô) = Contracted.
5. ◌ֹ (ō) = Tone-long.
6. ◌ְ (e) = Tone-short.
7. ◌ֳ (^{o}) = Tone-short.

As to quantity he further shows as follows:-

Naturally Long.

1. ◌ָ (â) = Contracted and Characteristic.
2. ◌ִי (î) = Contracted etc
3. וּ (û) = Contracted etc.
4. ◌ֵי (ê) = Contracted.
5. ◌ֶי (ê) = Contracted from a + y.
6. וֹ or ◌ֹ (ô) = Obscuration of a naturally long ◌ָ.
7. וֹ (ô) = Contracted.

Tone-Long.

1. ◌ָ (ā) = Closed tone for open syllable.
2. ◌ֶ (ē) = Arising from original short ă.
3. ◌ֵ (ē) = Arising from short ĭ or ĕ.
4. ◌ֹ (ō) = Arising from short ŭ.

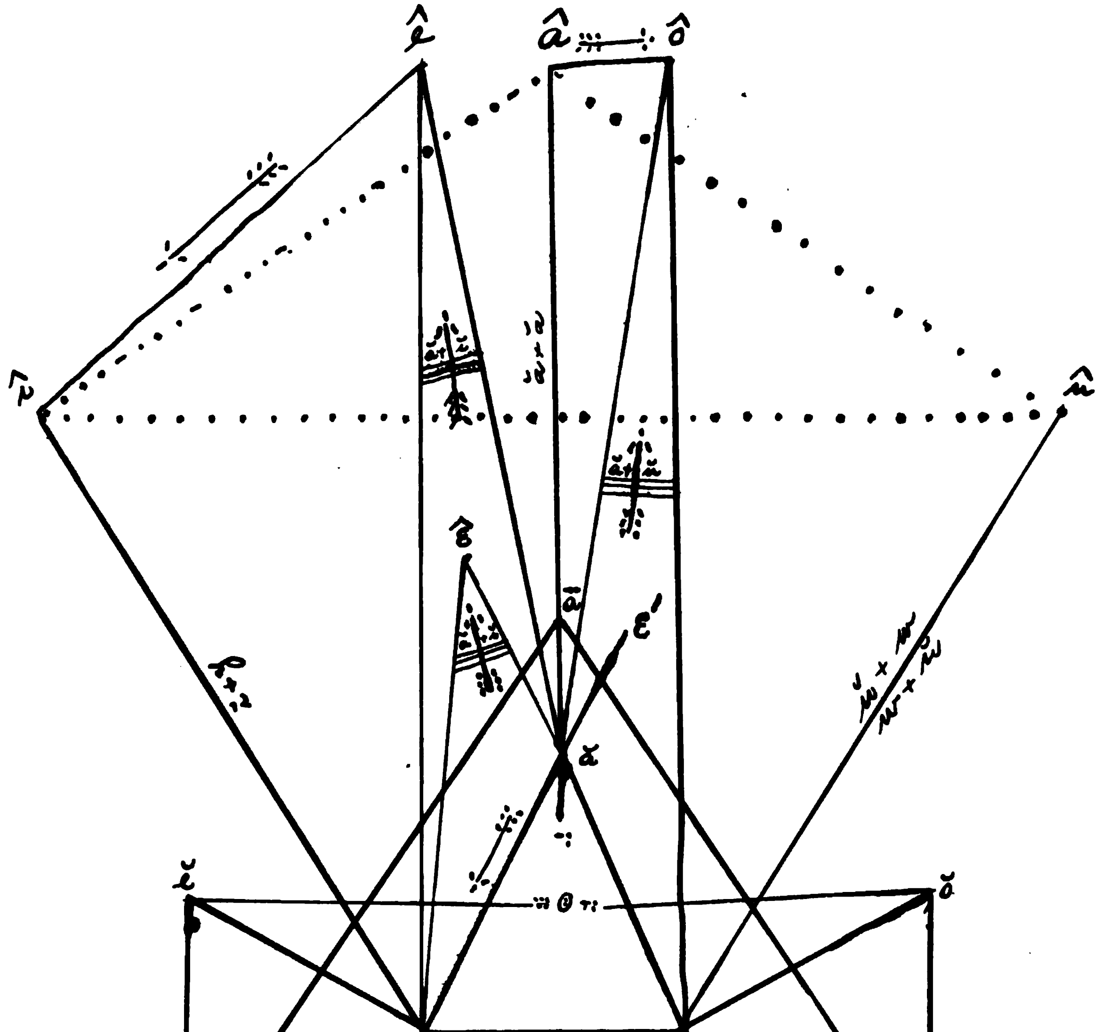
Short Sound.

1. ◌ַ (ă) = Pure Short.
2. ◌ִ (ĭ) = Pure Short.
3. ◌ִ (ĭ) = Attenuated from ă.
4. ◌ֻ (ŭ) = Pure Short.
5. ◌ֶ (ĕ) = Deflected from pure ĭ-sound.
6. ◌ָ (ŏ) = Deflected from pure ŭ-sound.

Tone-Short, or Sĕwâ.

1. ַ (ă) = Shortened to ְ or ֲ .
2. ִ (ĭ) = Shortened to ְ or ֱ .
3. ֻ (ŭ) = Shortened to ְ or ֳ .

Perhaps the best table yet prepared to illustrate the vowel changes is the following which was obtained from Professor Ira M. Price, University of Chicago:–


ê
â
ô
î
û
ɛ̂
ā
ɛ'
ɑ̆
ĕ
θ
ŏ
ĭ
ŭ
ē
ō

The following vowel-changes will be considered:-

1. Contraction, 2. Heightening, 3. Obscuration, 4. Deflection, 5. Attenuation, 6. Thinning, 7. Shortening, 8. Blunting, 9. Volatilization, 10. Sharpening, 11. Weakening, 12. Formation of new vowels, 13. Modification, 14. Anomalous Lengthening, 15. Prosthetic Vowels, 16. Păthăh-furtive, 17. Auxiliary Vowels, 18. Connecting Vowels, 19. Original Short.

I. Contraction.

Contraction is the process whereby two vowels, or a consonant and a vowel, are united together into one vowel.

This combination gives a naturally long vowel which is unchangeable at least as far as the process of volatilization is concerned, yet there are some exceptions to this general statement. Perhaps יְמֵי from יוֹם is the best example,

yet Gesenius says that the plural יָמִים is probably from a different singular.

The following are the various contractions found;—

1. â (ָ) = ă + ă e.g. הָשְׁפּוֹת from הָאַשְׁפּוֹת Nehemiah 3:13. Examples of this contraction are rare and subject to discussion.

2. î (ִי) = ĭ + y e.g. יִירַשׁ from יִיְרַשׁ.
 = y + ĭ e.g. הֵקִיל from הֵקְוִיל = הֵקְיִיל where the ו is commuted into י and then contraction takes place.

3. û (וּ) = w + ŭ e.g. יָשׁוּב from יַשְׁוֻב
 = ŭ + w e.g. יוּשַׁב from יֻוְשַׁב.

In a few cases the original ִ is retained and Dāghēš-fortē inserted in the second radical as in יִצַּר. if the Yodh is not

assimilated here.

4. ê (יֵ) = a+y e.g. חֵיקָה from חַיְקָה.

5. ê (יֵ) = a+y e.g. הֵיטִיב from הַיְטִיב.
= a+i e.g. בֵּית from בַּיִת.

There is doubt as to the above example illustrating the contraction of a+i into ê (יֵ), but it seems to point that way. Gesenius says "עַיִן (ground form ʿayn [ʿain] eye, construct עֵין)" William Henry Green gives the following:- "Middle Yodh quiesces in the plural of אַיִל ram plural אֵילִים, זַיִת olive plural זֵיתִים, לַיִל night plural לֵילוֹת, but not in חַיִל strength plural חֲיָלִים, עַיִן fountain plural עֲיָנוֹת, עַיִר ass-colt plural עֲיָרִים, תַּיִשׁ goat plural תְּיָשִׁים.

Middle Yodh always quiesces before the feminine and dual endings e.g. צַיִד provision feminine צֵידָה, עַיִן eye dual עֵינַיִם" Again he says בַּיִת after the softening of י to ĭ becomes בֵּית.

Not only is the Yodh quiescent here, but there are examples to show that א and ה also quiesce.

It seems that the form יֵדַע is a defective writing for יֵידַע from יַיְדַע. The ַ(ă) + y are contracted into ê and the Yodh becomes quiescent. This being true there seems to be no reason why the Yodh in בַּיִת may not be quiescent and the ַ + ִ unite to form ֵ fully written, yet one recognizes the fact that the ִ is a helping vowel.

If it can be proven that a

helping vowel can be united with another the point in the argument is gained.

It is desirable to prove this because there is an exception in the words mentioned above that must be explained in some such way.

The א is quiescent and lost in הָשְׁפוֹת from הָאַשְׁפּוֹת of הָרַמִּים II. Chron. 22:5 with הָאֲרַמִּים in II. Kings, 8:28, 29.

ה is lost in such contractions as a+u = וֹ in ָהוּ as found in קְטָלוֹ from קְטָלָהוּ.

6. ô (וֹ) = a+u e.g. קְטָלוֹ from קְטָלָהוּ by the loss of ה.

= a+w e.g. שׁוֹר from שָׁוֶר and עוֹלָה from עַוְלָה.

II. Obscuration.

Obscuration is the process by which an a-sound is made indistinct.

The Hebrew has, besides the naturally long ô which comes by the contraction given above, a naturally long ô which comes by obscuration.

It is usually written fully when it has the tone, but defectively when toneless.

In אֱלוֹהַּ it has the tone, but in אֱלֹהִים it is toneless.

ô (ֹ) = ָ (â) obscured in יֹאכַל from יַאְכַל where the ô has arisen from the obscuring of â which in turn has come from ־ְַ + ־ַ = ־ָ.

Gesenius says," in the vulgar Arabic as now spoken in south Palestine, yá kul (he eats) becomes yô kul.

The Hebrew has the a-sound obscured where the Arabic has retained it.

The following examples will illustrate this;- שׁוֹק *leg* Arabic سَاقٌ, גִּבּוֹר *hero* جَبَّارٌ, שִׁכּוֹר *drunkard* سَكَّارٌ, קִפּוֹז *the arrow-snake* قُفَّازٌ.

III. Blunting.

The next step to be considered is called blunting, or obtusion, whereby an original ŭ (ֻ) is changed into a ĭ (ֶ).

Eight examples are now presented to illustrate this by a comparison of the Hebrew with the Arabic.

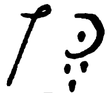
1. אַתֶּם = أَنْتُمْ.
2. אַתֵּן (אַתֶּן) = أَنْتُنَّ.

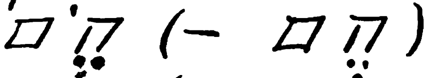
The only instance where אַתֵּן is found Ezekiel 34:31.

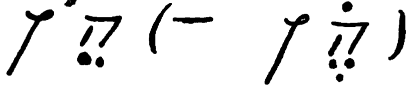
It would seem that the ֵ is only an incorrect writing of ֶ, in which case one of the points of ֶ was omitted by the scribes.

In favor of this is the fact that some MSS read with ֶ (אַתֶּן). The MSS waver between אַתֵּן and אַתֶּן.

3. תֶּם = تُمْ in قَتَلْتُمْ.
4. תֶּן = تُنَّ in قَتَلْتُنَّ.
5. כֶם = كُمْ.

6.  = كُنَّ

7.  = لهُمْ.

8.  = لهُنَّ.

IV. Deflection.

This step is known as deflection. There are only two vowels thus affected.

An ĭ (◌ִ) is deflected to ◌ֶ (ĕ) and ~~an~~ ŭ (◌ֻ) to ŏ (◌ָ).

A short ĭ (◌ִ) is often deflected in unaccented shut or closed syllables into ĕ (◌ֶ).

In the word חֵפֶץ with the pronominal suffix the form חֶפְצִי is found where one would expect the form חִפְצִי.

In the Syriac the ĭ usually appears as ĕ (◌ܶ).

The Syriac form for קִפְדֶהּ is ܩܶܦܕܶܗ.

A short ŭ (◌ֻ) in an unaccented shut or half-shut syllable according to Wright, generally becomes ŏ (◌ָ). An example is found in קָדְשׁוֹ from קֻדְשׁוֹ.

The Arabic is قُدْسُهُ.

An exception to this is found in such words as גֻדְלוֹ and קֻצְרְכֶם.

According to Dr Harper when an ĭ or a ŭ would stand before a guttural, in a closed or half-open syllable, then deflection takes place e.g. יַעֲמֹד for יַעְמֹד, נַעֲמֹד for נַעְמֹד, and הֶעֱמִיד for הַעְמִיד.

From the examples given by Wright it seems hardly necessary to use the word "guttural" as given by Dr. Harper.

קָדְשׁוֹ is one of the examples used by Wright.

V. Attenuation.

The next process is called attenuation.

This is a weakening in intensity whereby an ă (ַ) is changed into an ĭ (ִ). This change takes place in three different conditions of the syllable.

1. In half-open syllable or perhaps better, half-open before the tone e.g. דִּמְכֶם your blood for דַּמְכֶם.
2. In closed, especially preformative, syllables e.g. יִמְשֹׁל from an original יַמְשֹׁל.
3. In a sharpened syllable e.g. קִטֵּל from an original קַטֵּל.

This process is likewise exemplified in the Arabic of קִדְרָה with قِدْرَةٌ, דִּמְעָה with دَمْعَةٌ

In most of these cases the Syriac ranges on the side of the Arabic, but in some cases it is the Arabic which shows the

weakening of the vowel of the Hebrew צִדִּיק with the Arabic صِدِّيق (ṣid-dīḳ) and the Syriac ܫܰܬܺܝܩ (shat-tīk).

Likewise one may compare the Hebrew תַּלְמִיד with the Syriac ܬܰܠܡܺܝܕܳܐ and the Arabic تِلْمِيذ.

Something similar to attenuation is found in Latin where an ă is changed intō ĭ as tango, attingo; laxus, prolixus; ad-agō, adigō; expars, expers; facilis, difficilis.

VI Thinning.

The process called thinning will now be considered. In the ל״ה verbs before consonant additions the consonant י, which is represented by ה, combines with the stem-vowel ă and forms ֵי, but fefore consonant additions to denote gender and number the ֵי is changed into ִי

This is found in the Qăl, Pi'el, and Hiph'il forms especially. The form קָטַיְתָ becomes קָטִיתָ; קִטַּיְתָ becomes קִטִּיתָ, and הִקְטַיְתָ becomes הִקְטִיתָ.

VII. Heightening.

The step which is now considered is known by various names as:- "heightening", "lengthening", "elevation", and "assimilation".

"Heightening" is the term here employed.

There are four tone-long, or heightened, vowels, which have come from seven different operations through the three original short vowels;-

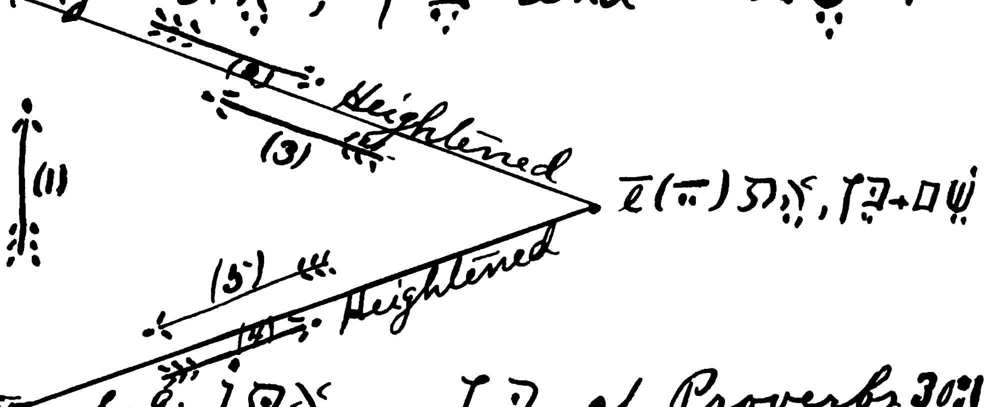
$$\begin{tikzcd} & \text{ĕ (ֱ) אַרְץ = אֶרְץ = אֶרֶץ.} \\ \text{ă (ַ)} \arrow[ur] \arrow[r] \arrow[dr] & \text{ā (ָ) בַּשַׂר = בָּשַׂר = בָּשָׂר.} \\ & \text{ē (ֵ) סוּסֵךְ of Isa. 60:9} \end{tikzcd}$$

ָךְ ; Isa. 22:1 כֻּלָּךְ ; לָךְ, בָּךְ and אֹתָךְ which seem to show that ֵ has come from an a-source.

In such words as אֵת, בֵּן and שֵׁם an original ִ has been heightened to ֵ

In the table, or diagram, below the various steps applicable to these words are shown.
In (1) the ִ is deflected to ֶ and in (2) the ֶ has in turn been heightened to ֵ while in (3) this ֵ is again shortened to ֶ when the Măqqēph is added.
The original ִ is shown when a pronominal suffix is added and in (4) this ִ is heightened to ֵ while it in return is again shortened to ִ when the pronominal suffix is attached.

ĕ(ֶ). e.g. אֶרֶץ־, בֶּן־ and שֶׁם־.

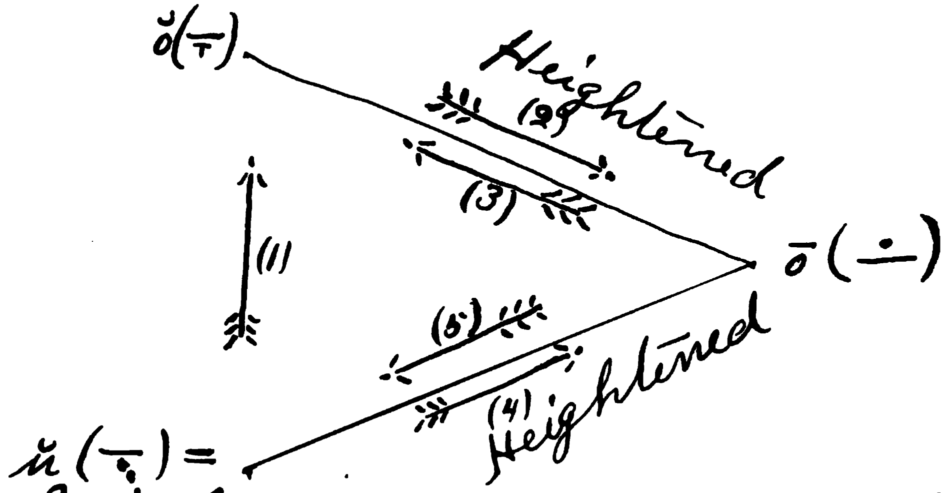


i(ִ)= e.g. אַרְצוֹ, בִּן of Proverbs 30:1, and שִׁמְכֶם.
Some might raise an objection,

because of the forms הֵם (- הֶם) and הֵן (- הֶן) and say that these two vowels ֵ and ֶ are both bluntĕd from an original ĭ and if so they come from the same source directly, but in reply would say that the shortēned forms with Mäqqēph, -הֶם and -הֶן, are the ones, most probably, which came from the original ĭ.

Of the eight forms which are given under the process of blunting only three appear with the ֵ.

It has been shown also that the form לָהֵן is found only once and that one case is subject to discussion, while in reference to the forms הֵם and הֵן it seems that they have been hightĕned from ֶ.



In this case the ֻ is deflected to ŏ (ָ) and then the same process is used as in the above diagram of ִ heightened to ֵ.

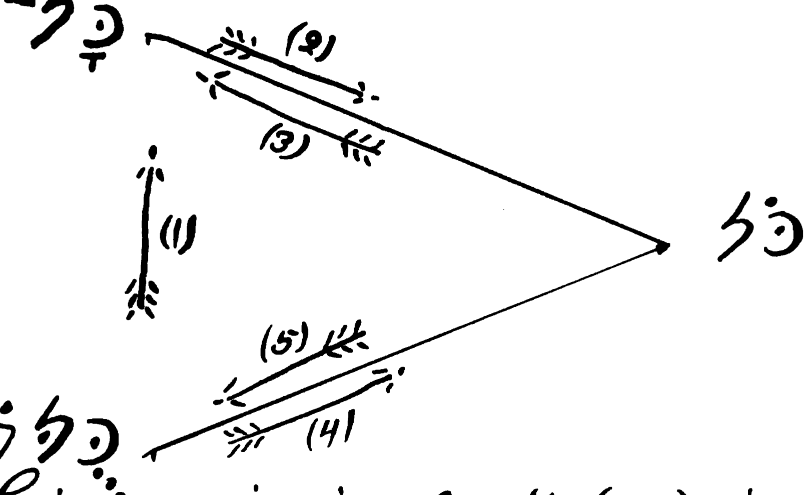
Plain cases of the heightening of ֻ to ֹ are to be seen in שׁאַל = שֹׁאַל in the Pu'al of ע' guttural verbs and in the ŭ-class segholates e.g. דֻשְׁדְ = דֹשֶׁד.

A further illustration of the above figure may be seen in the use of the word כֹל.

The original ŭ (ֻ) of this word is to be seen when a suffix is added i.e. כֻּלּוֹ.

In the Arabic the form is كُلّ

(kullu) where even the reason for the Dageš-forte is shown in the doubler (ʷ).



This original ŭ (◌ֻ) is heightened to ◌ֹ (ō) in כֹּל.
This ◌ֹ is shortened when the pronominal suffix is added.
Again, the ◌ֻ is deflected into ŏ (◌ָ), as shown above, when the Măqqēph is attached.
This ŏ (◌ָ) is heightened when the Măqqēph is withdrawn, and the heightened form כֹּל is shortened when the Măqqēph is again added.
So too the original דָקֻם with

the וַ consecutive out of pause gives וַיָּקָם, while in pause it is וַיָּקֹם where the ŏ (ָ) has been heightened to ō (ֹ).
Thus the figure is true of קום as in כל.
Wright says "so also long ū may in certain instances be shortened into ŭ, ŏ and then this vowel be reheightened into ó: יָשׁוּב = يَثُوبُ, but יָשֹׁב and וַיָּשָׁב = يَثُبْ.

VIII. Sharpening.

A sharpened syllable is one whose final consonant is doubled by means of a Dageš forte.

In this process there are two vowels which are materially changed. These are ĕ (◌ֶ) and ŏ (◌ָ). The ◌ֶ is thrown back to its original ĭ (◌ִ) whence it had been deflected e.g. אֶת־ with becomes אִתּוֹ with a pronominal suffix cf. Isa. 10:18 כַּרְמִלּוֹ from כַּרְמֶל.

Also compare אֶשְׁבַּע with אִשָּׁבַע.

The ŏ (◌ָ) is sharpened into ŭ (◌ֻ) in some cases, but not always e.g. חֹק with the Măqqēph becomes חָק־ and when sharpened the original ŭ (◌ֻ) is restored as in חֻקִּי but not always for the form חָקְּךָ

is found and in Ezekiel 20:18 even the form חוּקֵּי is seen. Again עֹז = ־עָז = עֻזִּי, but in Ex. 15:2 it is עָזִּי and in Ex. 15:13 it is עָזְּךָ, while in Ps. 81:2 the form עוּזֵּנוּ is found. In the Hŏph'ăl forms, of the פ"נ verb, the original ŭ (ֻ), which in most cases is deflected to ŏ (ָ), is restored e.g. הֻשַּׁל for הָנְשַׁל and יֻשַּׁל for יָנְשַׁל.

IX. Shortening.

The process of shortening is as follows;-

1. ā (ָ) becomes ă (ַ) e.g. דָם (construct, which is a shortened form, דַם) and יָד (construct יַד).

2. ĕ (ֶ) becomes ă (ַ) in אֶרֶץ, when the suffix is added, as in אַרְצוֹ, for here the tone passes away from the ĕ (ֶ) and it goes back to its original.

3. ē (ֵ) becomes ĭ (ִ) e.g. סֵפֶר (construct סִפְרֵי, with suffix סִפְרִי.

4. ē (ֵ) becomes ĕ (ֶ) e.g. בֵּן son, בֶּן־; יֹאמֵר, but with וַ = וַיֹּאמֶר.

5. ē (ֵ) is shortened into ă (ַ) in some cases e.g. זָקֵן (const. זְקַן); חָצֵר (construct חֲצַר); Isa. 33:8 קָמַל in pause from קָמֵל of Isa. 19:6, קָמֵלוּ.

6. ō (ֹ) is shortened into ŏ (ָ) e.g. קֹדֶשׁ (construct קָדְשֵׁי, with suffix קָדְשִׁי); חֹרֶב drought (construct חָרְבֵי, with suffix חָרְבִּי.

7. ō (ֹ) is shortened to ŭ (ֻ) e.g. חֹק with suffix חֻקִּי, yet it is sometimes חָקְּךָ; כֹּל with suffix is כֻּלּוֹ.

X. Weakening.

The process of weakening belongs to the naturally long vowels. It has been shown that a naturally long vowel can not be volatilized yet it can be weakened e.g. מָעוֹן as found in I. Chron. 2:45 becomes in the plural מְעוּנִים of II Chron. 26:7; מָתוֹק, Judges 14:14, is מְתוּקִים in the plural of Psalms 19:11

Again, in the Niph'ăl of the ע"ו verb, the 3 M. Sg. נָסוֹג to withdraw oneself becomes in the 2 M. נְסוּגוֹתָ.

There are some examples from the Syriac which help materially. Those given by Wright are ܡܘܽܢ mūn for ܡܳܢ mōn and ܬܫܽܘܒܽܘܚܬܳܐ for ܬܶܫܒܽܘܚܬܳܐ.

XI. Volatilization.

Under this division there is considered another change which is caused by the shifting of the tone.

The change of a long vowel to a short one has already been considered, but now comes a step which shortens still more the vowels affected.

There are three names given to this new vowel.

It is called Š^{e}wâ, half-vowel, and tone-short.

The ordinary sign used when a vowel is volatilized is $\underset{:}{-}$, and is called S^{e}wâ mobile or vocal, when that vowel is under a labial, dental, sibilant, lingual, or palatal.

There are some exceptions to this which will be considered later.

The process of volatilization affects

all of the tone-long, original short, and deflected vowels, but since those vowels, which have been heightened or deflected have come from an original short vowel it appears that the act of volatilization affects directly only the original short vowels ă, i, and ŭ.

Examples of the effect, directly or indirectly, are as follows;—

1. ă (ַ) שָׁמְרָה from שָׁמַר.
2. ā (ָ) רְקִיעַ " רָקִיעַ.
3. ē (ֶ) מְלָכִים " מֶלֶךְ.
4. i (ִ) סְפָרִים " סֵפֶר = סִפְר
5. ī (ֵ) לְבַב " לֵבָב.
6. ĭ (ֶ) שְׁמִי " שֶׁם־.
7. ŭ (ֻ) בְּקָרִים " בֹּקֶר = בֻּקְר.
8. ō (ֹ) בַּהֲרָגְהוֹ " בַּהֲרֹג.
9. ŏ (ָ) קְטָלְךָ and קָטְלְךָ.

In addition to the Šewâ mobile just considered there is another class called the compound Šewâ.

To the simple S^{e}wâ there is added a short vowel corresponding to the three original vowels.

This compound S^{e}wâ is used mostly with gutturals.

When the term guttural is used it is understood that ר is excluded although it generally has some of the qualities of gutturals.

There is found under the gutturals a S^{e}wâ which is marked ◌ְ, the same as the S^{e}wâ mobile, but this S^{e}wâ is called quiescens, silent, or syllable-divider and is distinguished by Dr. Harper as follows;-

"1. Under all consonants standing in the middle of a word without a vowel or half-vowel.

2. Under a final letter, when that letter a. Is Kăph; or b. Is a consonant containing Dāghēš-fortē, or preceded by another

consonant with Šᵉwâ."

When an a-class vowel is volatilized under a guttural it becomes (ֲ) Hāṭēph-Păthăh and is transliterated ă.

The original stem of the Qal is קַטַל = קָטַל so when the תָ ָה is added the ultimate vowel is volatilized so that from גָּאַל one gets גָּאֲלָה.

When an i-class vowel is volatilized under a guttural it becomes (ֱ) Hāṭēph-Sᵉghôl which is transliterated ĕ.

The best example of this is in the word אֱלוֹהַּ. The ֱ here comes from an original ĭ as is to be found in ~~The~~ the Arabic where the word for God is إِلٰه, with the article اَللّٰه.

When a~~n~~ u-class vowel is volatilized under a guttural one gets a Hāṭēph-Qāmĕç (ֳ) which

is transliterated e.

This is exemplified in חֹדֶב = חֳדָבִים and עֹפֶר = עֳפָרִים.

Besides the Šᵉwâ mobile under consonants, which under gutturals without an exception becomes compound Šᵉwâ, there is another compound Šᵉwâ which takes the place of a quiescent Šᵉwâ.

In reference to the choice between the three compound Šᵉwâs which the gutturals take, it may be said that ע, ח, and ה prefer, at the beginning of a syllable, the Ḥāṭēph-Păthăh, but א has a preference for the Ḥāṭēph-Sᵉghôl.

An exception to this is found in the words חיה and חיה where the preference is for ֱ instead of ֲ i.e. חֱיוֹת, חֱיֵה, and חֱיֵה.

When the tone syllable is moved

forward the ◌ֱ under אֱ becomes ◌ֲ as in אֱכֹל, but אֲכָל־ when the tone is lost because of the Măqqēph.

Also the combination ◌ֱ ◌ֶֽ sometimes entirely changes into ◌ֲ ◌ַֽ when there is a removal of the tone e.g. הֶֽעֱמַדְתָּ with וְ consecutive becomes וְהַֽעֲמַדְתָּ.

According to Gesenius only ◌ֲ and ◌ֳ are found under consonants other than gutturals.

Green cites one example where a ◌ֱ appears (עֱלְעֱלִים in the edition of Stephanus), but it is not found in the best texts, hence it must be a scribal error for a simple Sᵉwâ (◌ְ).

The several different cases where ◌ֲ sometimes is found under letters which are not gutturals, as collated from the different authorities, are as follows:—

1. Under a letter which is doubled e.g. שִׁבְּלֵי branches Zechariah 4:12. This doubling causes a more distinct pronunciation of the S^e^wâ.

2. Under a letter which should be doubled i.e. הַבְרָכָה Gen. 27:38, and לֻקֳחָה־ Gen. 2:23. Perhaps used in such cases to call attention to, or make up for, an omitted doubling.

3. Under a letter followed by the same letter e.g. רִבְבוֹת Num. 10:36. Here used to show a distinct separation of the two letters.

4. Under initial sibilants which are preceeded by a ו copulative e.g. וּשְׂדֵה Lev. 25:34, וּשְׁמַע Dan. 9:18, and וּזֲהַב Gen. 2:12.
Its purpose here is to emphasize the vocal character of the S^e^wâ.

5 Under ט, ק, ר, ת, ב, and ס respectively in Jer. 22:28, Ps. 55:22,

Ps. 28:9, Ez. 26:21, Esther 2:8 and Ps. 19:7

Same reason for its use as indicated under division four.

6. Anomalous forms as Gen 3:17 תֹּאכֲלֶנָּה and Gen. 21:6 – יִצֳחַק.

The Ḥăṭeph-Qāmĕç is used more freely with other than gutturals than is Ḥăṭeph-Păthăḥ or Ḥăṭeph-Seghôl.

Its use is as follows:–

1. When a Ḥôlem has been dropped i.e. תִּקֳּבֶנּוּ from תִּקֹּב Num. 23:25 and in Ruth 2:1 שִׁבֳּלִים. Here an effort is made to retain the o-sound by means of ֳ (ŏ).

2. Cases due to the omission of Dāghēš-forte e.g. לֻקֳחָה for לֻקְּחָה Gen. 2:23.

3. Cases due to following guttural only e.g. וְנִקְרֳאָה Esther 3:14.

4. Calls attention to vocal sound of the Šewâ e.g. בַּסֳּעָרָה II Kgs. 2:1.

5. Cases due to preceeding o-sound i.e. רָעֳמִ from רֹעַם, and פָּעֳלֵךְ from פֹּעַל Ruth 2:11.

6. A preceeding initial וּ and a guttural following the S^e^wâ causes it to become compound e.g. וּסֳעָדָה I. Kgs. 13:7, וּטֳהָר־ Job 17:10.

It must be said that no uniform system can be fixed upon since the M.S.S differ in the use of the compound S̲ewâ.

XII. Formation of New Vowels.

There are four vowels which arise as new vowels similar to the original short i and a plus the deflected ֱ and (ŏ) ֳ. These are ֲ, ִ, ֱ, and ֳ.

1. ֲ (ă) יַעֲמְד = יַעַמְדוּ.
2. ִ (ĭ) לִמְשְׁלְ = לִמְשִׁלְ.
3. ֱ (ĭ) יֶחֱזְקְ = יֶחֶזְקוּ.
4. ֳ (ŏ) יָעֳמְדָ = יָעָמְדָ

In 1, 2, and 4 the new vowels are formed by a compound Šᵉwâ, under a guttural, coming to stand before a consonant with simple Šᵉwâ (mobile). This rule is subject to exceptions.

The new vowel (ִ) in 3 is a change of one Šᵉwâ to the light vowel ִ because of the difficulty in pronouncing two vocal Šᵉwâs.

XIII. Modification.

In this division there is considered a step in which there are grounds for radically different opinions.

What is the origin of the ֶ (ĕ) which can not be said to be deflected directly from original i nor blunted from u? It is found in such words as יֶחְדּוֹת from יַחְדִּת and יֶדְכֶם from יָד, original יַד.

There are three theories to be considered:-

1. That some words have two different vowels under different circumstances, provincialism perhaps i.e. יֶדְכֶם and יָדוֹת (ֵ), נֶקְשֶׁיתָ and נִקְשַׁיְתָ, נֶחְבָּא and נַחְבֵּאתָ.

2. That an original ַ (ă) may be attenuated to ִ (ĭ) and then under certain conditions again

be deflected to ◌ֶ (ĕ). The attenuated form of the original שָׁאַל is שְׁאִלְתִּיהוּ, but the deflected form is שְׁאֶלְתֶּם; נַעֲשָׂה an original form, נִפְעַל corresponds to the attenuated form, while נֶעֶשְׂתָה shows the deflection. Two changes from the original may be seen in אִתִּי, אֶת־ and אֵת.

3. That it may be a modification similar to attenuation wherein a ◌ַ (ă) may be changed into ◌ֶ as well as into ◌ִ, since ◌ֶ may be used instead of ~~any~~ one of the original short vowels i.e. (1). An ă heightened to ◌ֶ, tone-long, in אֶרֶץ from אַרְץ.

(2). An ĭ deflected to ◌ֶ in חֶפְצִי from חֵפֶץ.

(3). ~~An~~ ŭ blunted into ◌ֶ ~~in~~ in אֶתֶם from אֻתְם Arabic أُتْم. Because of this fact, that ◌ֶ (ĕ)

comes from these different directions, it is most likely that ā ַ (ă) may be modified into ֶ just as a ַ (ă) may be attenuated into ִ. In fact this seems to be the correct theory.
The following examples will illustrate this;- דֶּבֶר from דַּבַר; דֶּרְכְּכֶם from דַר; נֶחְבָּא from נַחְבְּאָה; יֶהְדָּפֶנּוּ from הָדַף.
In support of this theory of the modification of Păthăh to Sᵉghôl it seems that the so-called Segholate nouns, which are so-named because of the theory that the second vowel is Seghôl, should be called Păthăh nouns.
It appears that the so-called helping vowel under the second radical of the ă, ĭ, and ŭ-class is not Seghôl but Păthăh. This Păthăh has been modified into Sᵉghôl, except when there

is a guttural, then the modification does not tāke place.

It seems to be toō much of a complicatiōn of matters to say that a Sᵉghôl was added to the ground-form, and then again, when the plural is formed, that a ָ (ā) was insertēd before the tone.

It seems likely that the helping vowel was Păthăh, and that, when plural affixes were added, it was heightened in an open syllable to ָ (ā).

This ָ heightēned from a ַ (ă) appears in the ă, ĭ, and ŭ-class of the so-called Sᵉgholates before plural affixes and in the plural before light suffixes.

In the other cases the helping vowel ַ is lost and the original ִ is restōred.

It seems that the original form

of אֶרֶץ was אַרְץ, then a helping vowel ַ (ă) was inserted under the ר and the form became אַרַץ. The ultimate ַ (ă) was then modified into ֶ (ĕ) while the penultimate ַ (ă) was heightened to tone-long Seghôl (ḗ). As an illustration the three classes of Segholates are here given as follows;-

1. נֶפֶשׁ = נַפְשׁ, נַפַשׁ, נַפְשִׁי and נְפָשִׁים.
2. סֵפֶר = סִפְר, סִפַר, סִפְרִי and סְפָרִים.
3. קֹדֶשׁ = קֻדְשׁ, קֻדַשׁ, קָדְשִׁי and קֳדָשִׁים.
4. When one of the consonants is a guttural the form then appears as פֹּעַל = פֻּעְל, פֻּעַל, פָּעֳלִי and פְּעָלִים.

If it is true that a helping vowel can thus be heightened it goes to help prove that such vowels are subject to the same general modifications as others, therefore it adds strength to the theory that בֵּית is a contraction of the helping

vowel ă (ַ), which has been attenuated to ĭ (ִ), with the original ַ and thus forming יֶ after the י has been dropped because of its weakness.

Gesenius says: "But there are various reasons for believing that originally a toneless ă was heard after the second radical. The corresponding qăṭl-forms in Assyrian, with the case-endings, are kalbu, šamsu and abnu, but without the case-endings, kalab, šamaš, and aban.

In Delitzsch's opinion the vowel is ~~only~~ sounded only after the second radical in order to avoid the double consonant at the end.

The plurals of the Hebrew Segholates however point rather to the ground-forms málak, siphar, and qúdaš" See Gesenius page 238 § 84.

XIV Anomalous Lengthening.

The original form of the Hiph'il was הַקְטַל, the fourth form of the Arabic أَفْعَلَ corresponding to it.

The penultimate vowel ַ (ă) is attenuated to ִ (i), while the ultimate ַ (ă) has been attenuated to ִ (i) it should in turn be heightened to ֵ (ē), just as it is in the Jussive הַקְטֵל, but there appears instead a naturally long ī (ִי), which Dr. Harper calls anomalously lengthened. Gesenius says, "This î (ִי) may have been transferred originally from the Imperfects of verbs ע״י, as a convenient means of distinction between the Indicative and Jussive, to the Imperfect of the strong verb and afterwards to the whole of the Hiph'il." Slade says the same.

This ע"ו Hiph'il Imperfect form is יָקִים and it seems that the statement of Gesenius is correct, else the Jussive and Imperfect would have the same form.

XV. Prosthetic Vowels.

The regular Hebrew nouns have only three radicals, but there have arisen a few nouns with the three original radicals plus an additional one, א, ה, or י, which is added by means of a new vowel. These vowels are usually ֲ, ֶ, and ֱ.

A ~~good~~ example is found in Job 31:32 in the form אֶזְרֹעִי from זְרֹעַ to which an אֶ with the prosthetic vowel ֱ has been added to pronounce it more easily; also אֲשְׁכָּה where the prosthetic vowel ֲ (ă) plus the א has been added to the original שְׁכָּה.

These prosthetic vowels in Arabic are usually ĭ (ِ) and ŭ (ُ) accompanied with ا (Alif) e.g. اُقْتُلْ and اِقْتَتِلْ.

XVI. Păthăh - Furtive.

A short vowel ַ (ă) is sometimes inserted for facilitating the pronunciation of a word. Professor Ira M. Price says this vowel is found under a final guttural "when it is preceded by a heterogeneous long vowel, or any long vowel except ā".

The final gutturals ה, ח, or ע receives this vowel, but א never receives a Păthăh-furtive because it is always quiescent. Reš never receives it unless it be the case in Psalms 7:6 (יִרַדֹּף) which may be read yiardōph or yĭrăddōph.

It hardly seems possible that the ă here can be called a Păthăh-furtive because this is a penultimate syllable while the general application requires it

to be final.
William Henry Green has the following to say in reference to such words as שָׁמַעַתְּ and וַיִּחַדְּ; "But both the Sh'va under the final letter and the Daghesh-lene in it show that the guttural is not followed by a vowel. The sign beneath it must consequently be Păthăh-furtive and represents an antecedent vowel-sound".
The view held by Wright is, that the Păthăl here is an auxiliary one, hence it will be treated under the head of "auxiliary vowels".
When the guttural which has under it a Păthăh-furtive is no longer final the Păthăh vanishes, Examples of the Păthăh-furtive are as follows:- אֱלוֹהַּ, רוּחַ, שָׁמֵעַ, מְשַׁלִּיחַ and מַגְבִּיהַּ.

XVII. Auxiliary Vowels.

When a word ends in ע or ח and is fallowed by ד or תּ there is inserted an auxiliary ֲ (ă).

The sound is so slight that it does not effect the Daghesh-lene, for in דַּחַדּ for דַּחְדּ the Daghesh still remains in the ד.

This auxiliary ֲ (ă) is best illustrated in the 2 F. Sg. of all the Perfects of the ל״ guttural verbs i.e. קָשַׁחַתְּ for קָשַׁחְתְּ and הִתְקַשַּׁחַתְּ for הִתְקַשַּׁחְתְּ.

In the various Segholate forms there is an insertion of a helping vowel ֲ, ֱ, ִ or ֳ. The original עַרְךְ becomes עֱרֱךְ through the helping vowel ֱ if it be not the modification of a ֲ as indicated elsewhere in this paper;

נַעַר from נַעְר with the helping vowel ַ; בַּיִת from בַּיְת through the helping vowel ĭ (ִ) which is placed here because י has a preference for this class i.e. the i-class; while תֹּהְו becomes תֹּהוּ through the insertion of the helping vowel in the bosom of the ו because of the preference for the u-class vowel.

It is evident that the three original short vowels plus the deflected ֶ, which comes from more sources and serves more purposes than any other, are auxiliary or helping vowels.

XVIII. Connecting Vowels.

The so-called vowels, ◌ַ, ◌ָ, ◌ֶ, ◌ֵ and ◌ְ, seem to be new vowels added in order to connect nouns and verbs with the pronominal suffixes, but on investigation they really appear to be only the modifications of what seems to be old case and verbal endings.

The following examples will show where the connecting vowels are found with verbs:–

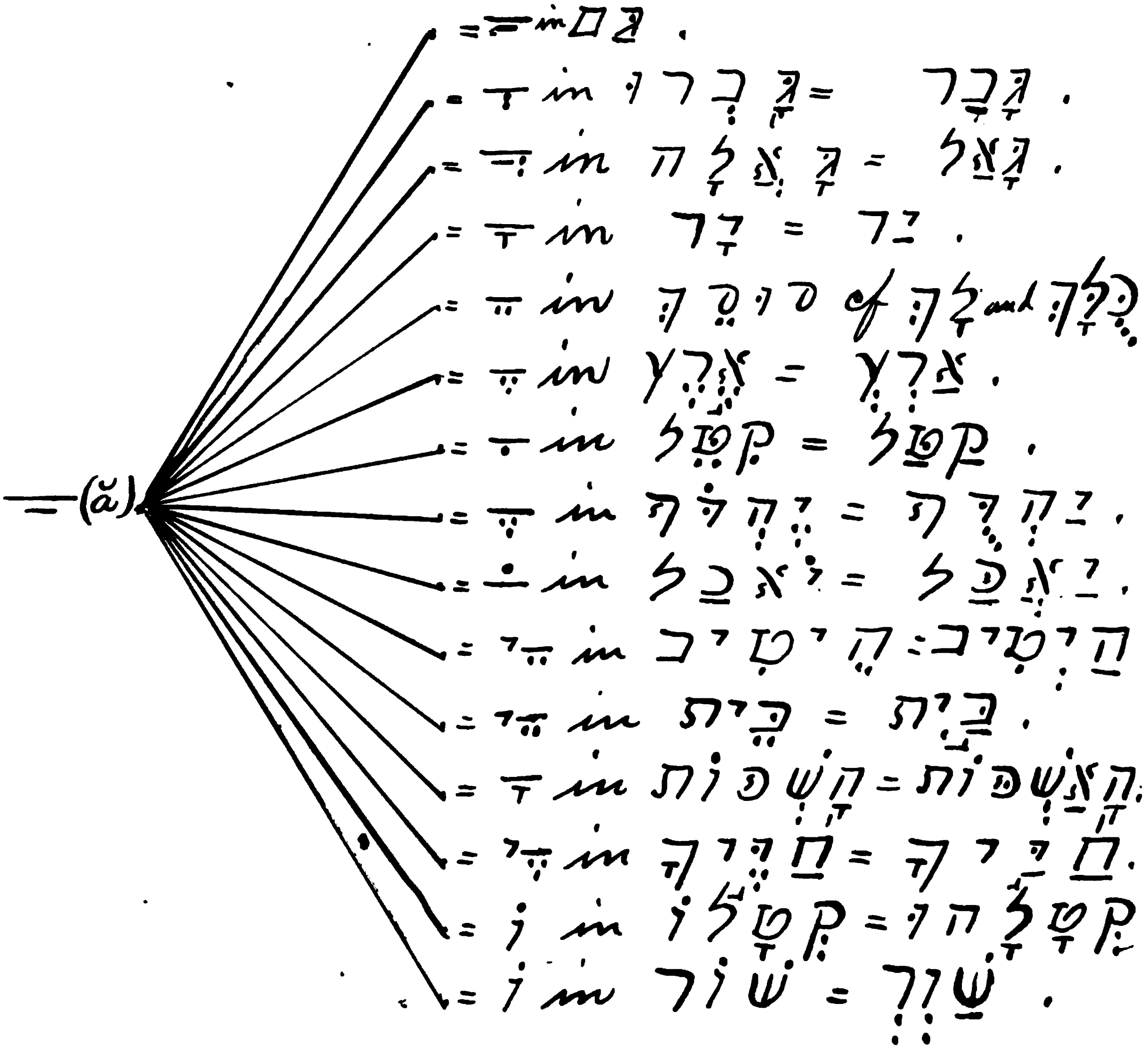
1. ◌ַ (ă) קְטָלָתַם.
2. ◌ָ (ā) קְשָׁלָם.
3. ◌ֶ (ĕ) קְטָלָתֶךְ.
4. ◌ֵ (ē) יִקְטְלֵךְ.
5. ◌ֶ (e) יִקְטְלֶהָ.
6. ◌ְ (ᵉ) קְשָׁלְךָ.

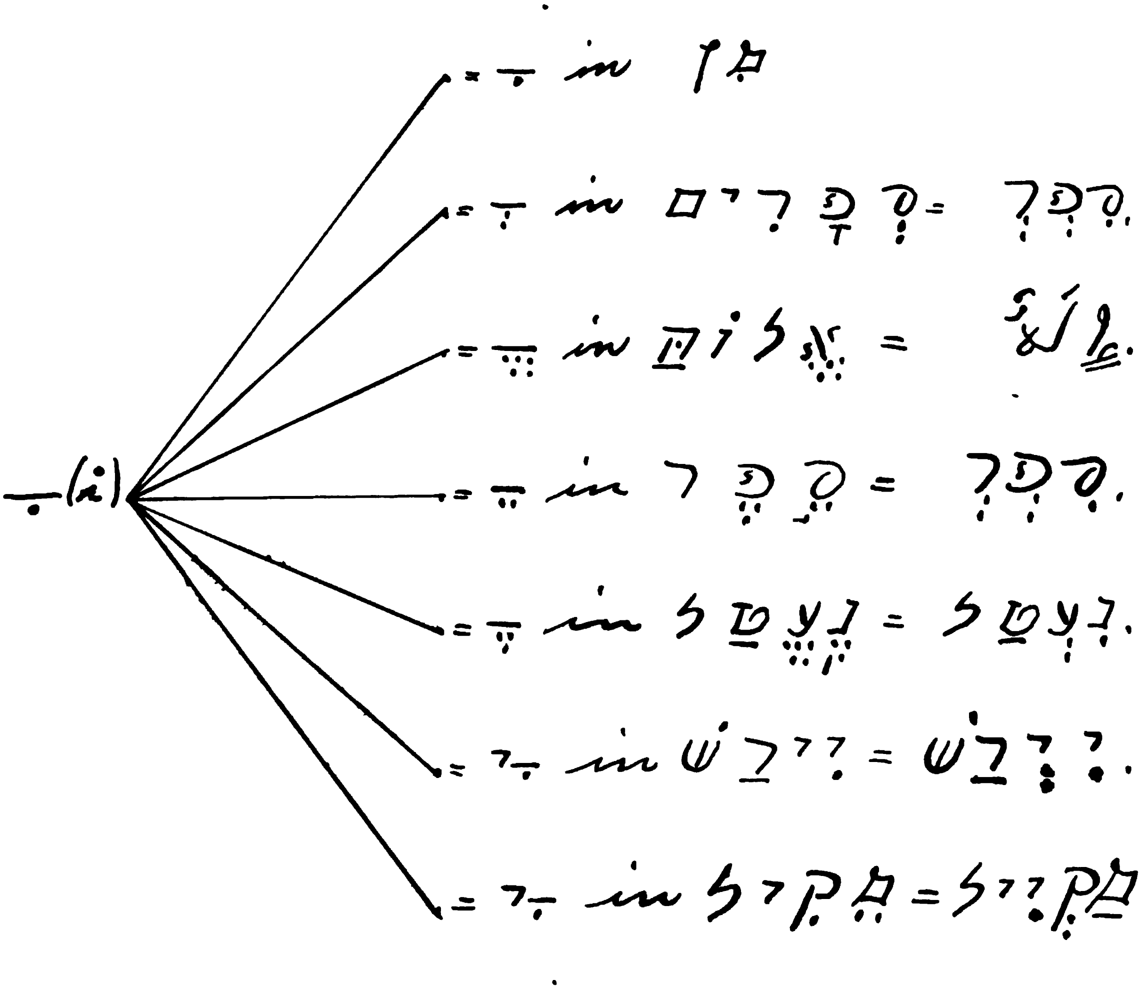
These vowels are also used to connect the nouns with pronominal suffixes.

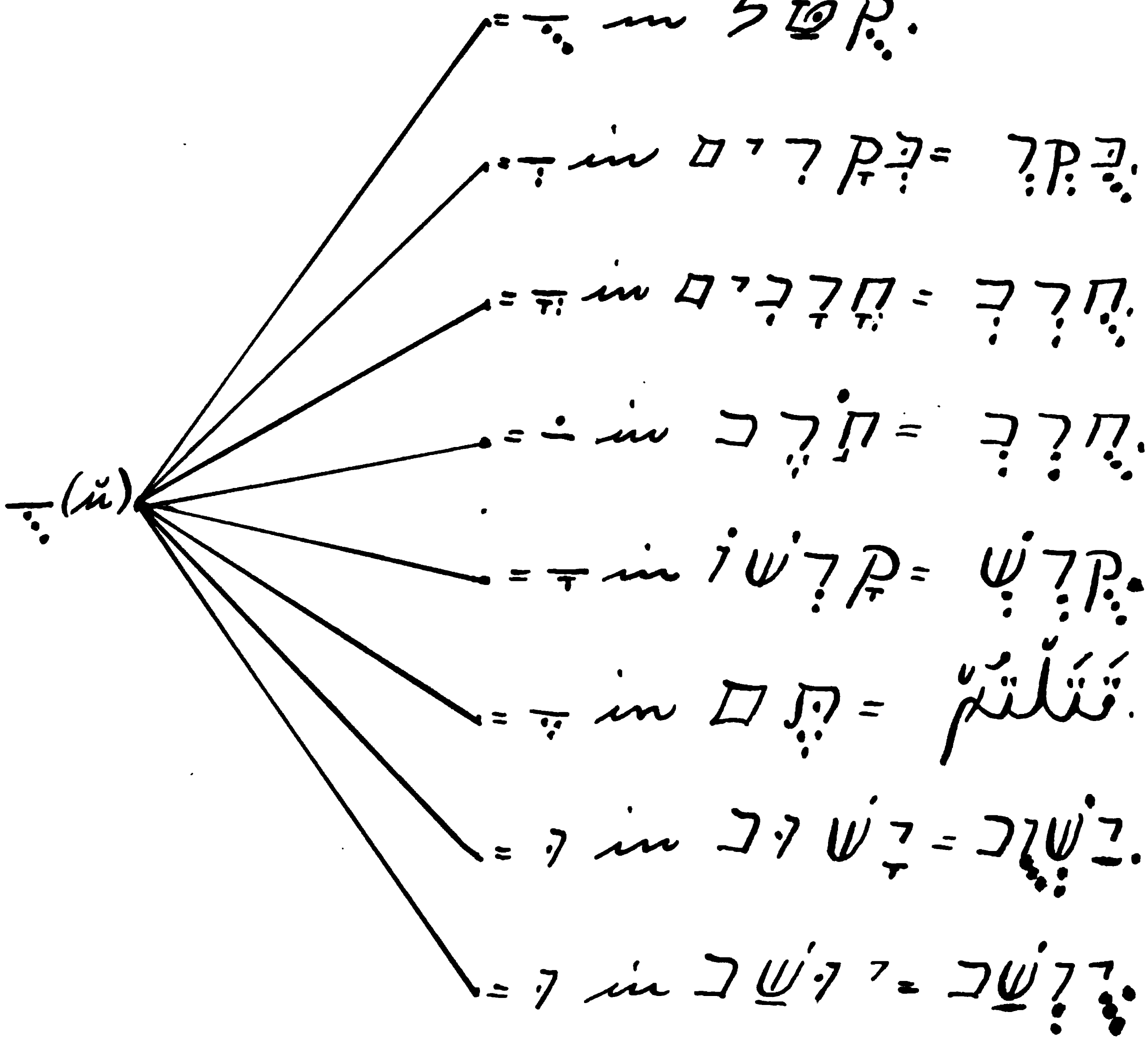
XIX. Original Short Vowels.

As has been shown before there are three original short vowels i.e. ă, ĭ, and ŭ. The Arabic has these same three short vowels i.e. ـَ (ă), ـِ (ĭ), and ـُ (ŭ), but they are not subject to so many changes as the Hebrew. The only step worthy of mention is the full writing i.e. ـَا, ـِي, and ـُو.

From the above nineteen changes it may be shown that all of these different vowels and modifications come from three original short vowels as will be seen in the following diagrams:-


—(ă)
= ַ in □בַ .
= ָ in גְּבָרוּ = גָּבָר .
= ָ in גְּאָלָה = גָּאַל .
= ָ in דָּר = דַּר .
= ֵ in סוּסֵהּ of לָךְ and כְּלָךְ
= ֶ in אֶרֶץ = אַרְץ .
= ֶ in קֶטֶל = קַטְל .
= ֶ in יְקַדֶּה = יְקַדְּה .
= ֹ in לֹא כַל = לְאַכַּל .
= ֵי in הֵיטִיב = הֵיטִיב
= ֵי in בֵּית = בַּיִת .
= ָ in הָשְׁפוֹת = הָאַשְׁפּוֹת .
= ֶי in חֶדֶיךָ = חֶדֶיךָ .
= וּ in קָטְלוּ = קָטְלָהוּ .
= וּ in שׁוּר = שׁוּר .

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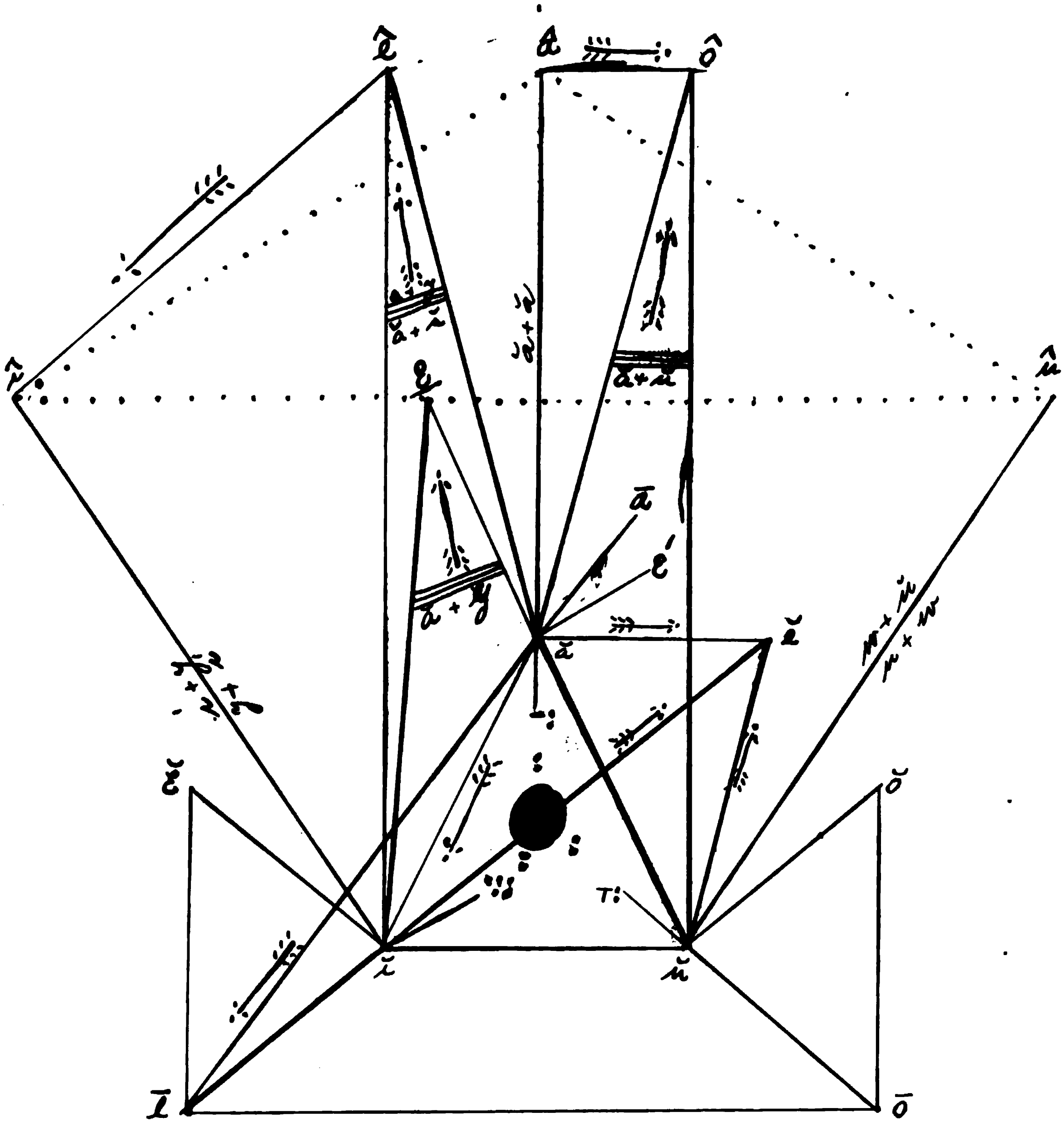
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